

REMARKS

I. Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-54 were pending in the above-identified patent application.

Claims 4, 5, 26, 34, 53, and 54 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims (Office Action, p. 14).

Claims 1, 3, 6-9, 15, 18-22, 25, 27-31, 33, 35-38, 46, and 49-52 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Pyo U.S. Patent No. 6,636,836 (“Pyo”) (Office Action, p. 2). Claims 10-14, 16-17, 39-45, and 47-48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pyo in view of Reese U.S. Patent No. 6,236,980 (Office Action, p. 8). Claims 2, 23-24, and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pyo in view of Reese and further in view of Bieganski et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,334,127 (Office Action, p. 13).

II. Summary of Applicants’ Reply

Applicants thank the Examiner for his time in participating in the telephonic interview on October 6, 2006 regarding this patent application. A summary of the telephonic interview is provided in Section III of this Reply.

Applicants also appreciate the Examiner’s indication that claims 4, 5, 26, 34, 53, and 54 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The Examiner’s claim rejections are respectfully traversed.

III. Summary of October 6, 2006 Telephonic Interview

On October 6, 2006, the undersigned called the Examiner to discuss the August 15, 2006 Office Action. In particular, the undersigned called the Examiner to discuss the Examiner's rejection of independent claims 1, 22, 27, and 31 as being anticipated by Pyo.

The undersigned, referring the Examiner to FIG. 6 of Pyo, stated that Pyo discloses a system that includes a user agent, recommendation agents, and a recommendation manager for managing the user agent and recommendation agents. The undersigned, referring the Examiner to FIG. 4 of Pyo, further stated that a recommendation agent provides a list of recommended items to the recommendation manager, including both a "predicted score" and "corresponding belief" with the list.

In contrast to the claims, the undersigned submitted that neither the predicted score nor the corresponding belief, included with the list of recommendations, are modified by the system of Pyo. Rather, the undersigned submitted that the only value disclosed as being modified by the system of Pyo is the "influential power." And, referring the Examiner to FIG. 5 of Pyo, the undersigned stated that the influential power is not transmitted with a list of recommendations by a recommendation agent, but rather is stored at the user agent and modified by the recommendation manager.

The Examiner requested that the arguments set forth above be submitted in written form so that they can be further considered, along with a Request for Continued Examination of this patent application.

IV. The Section 102 Rejections

Independent claims 1, 22, 27, and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Pyo.

As set forth above in Section III, the system of Pyo includes recommendation agents for providing lists of recommendations to a recommendation manager. And, included with each list of recommendations are a “predicted score” and “corresponding belief” (Pyo, col. 5, ll. 43-45). Based on the degree of user satisfaction in the recommendations of a particular recommendation agent, an “influential power” as stored at a user agent is modified by the recommendation manager of Pyo (Pyo, col. 5, ll. 3-7).

In contrast to the system of Pyo, independent claims 1, 22, 27, and 31 recite a plurality of producer modules that each produce a list of recommendations, the list of recommendations including a “confidence level,” and the confidence level being modified based on a “weighting value.” As described above, Pyo does not show or suggest modifying a value included with a list of recommendations. Rather, the only value disclosed as being modified by the system of Pyo is the influential power, which is not transmitted with a list of recommendations, but rather is stored at a user agent.

Thus, at least because Pyo fails to show or suggest modification of a “confidence level” as claimed, independent claims 1, 22, 27, and 31 are not anticipated by Pyo, and the rejections of the claims under section 102 should be withdrawn. In addition, dependent claims 2-21, 23-26, 28-30, and 32-54 are allowable at least because independent claims 1, 22, 27, and 31 are allowable. Thus, the rejections of these claims are moot and should also be withdrawn.

V. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 1-54 are patentable. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and prompt allowance are accordingly respectfully requested.

VI. Authorization

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this Reply, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Director is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

Respectfully submitted,
Wilmer Cutler Pickering
Hale and Dorr LLP

Date: November 15, 2006


Laura A. Paquette
Registration No. 48,446
Attorney for Applicants

Wilmer Cutler Pickering
Hale and Dorr LLP
Customer No. 28089
399 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022
Tel: 212-230-8800
Fax: 212-230-8888